GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6497
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FORECASTS OF MONSOON FAILURE AFFECTED BY DROUGHT
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that according to different global forecasts there would be monsoon failure in India during 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Union Government has also set up any machinery whereby a forecast can be made about districts likely to be affected by drought so that the action plan may be evolved before time to tackle such problem;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the States which have been facing drought perennially for the last four to five years;

(f) the steps taken so far to alleviate the sufferings of the farmers in drought-prone States;

(g) whether the Government has set up any crisis management system in this regard; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a) & (b): Many global climate prediction centres regularly prepare seasonal forecasts of precipitation for the whole Globe. According to these latest global forecasts, Southwest monsoon rainfall over India in 2005 is likely to be near normal or above normal. At present no modelling group is indicating a monsoon failure in India during 2005. However, a few models predict a 50 percent chance for occurrence of El-Nino in July, August and September, 2005 which perhaps may influence rainfall in the Indian sub-continent in these months. It may be mentioned that there is no one-to-one relationship between El-Nino and Indian monsoon rainfall. Global climate prediction centres will update their forecasts every month by incorporating latest atmospheric and sea surface temperature data. According to the long range forecast issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the 2005 South-west monsoon season (June to September) rainfall is likely to be 98% of long period average with a model error of +5%. IMD will issue an update forecast during the last week of June 2005.

(c) & (d): Yes Sir, India Meteorological Department have recently set up a forecast system, whereby a forecast can be made about districts / sub-divisions likely to be affected by drought. However, at present this forecast system is working on research mode only and is expected to be operational by 2007/2008.

National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecast has also initiated action for generating district level medium range forecast using some global models.

Further, the Ministry of Agriculture has also initiated a project for development of Extended Range Forecast System for Climate Risk Management in Agriculture to be developed with the help of Indian Institute of Technology Delhi and other prominent institutes in India and abroad. This project aims at orienting research and scientific capabilities towards development of extended range forecast system in suitable time and spatial scale in tune with need of risk minimization and resource optimisation in our farming system.

(e): During the last 4-5 years, sub divisions of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Kerala had perennial problems due to deficient rainfall during the southwest monsoon season. Andaman and Nicobar Islands received deficient rainfall (rainfall deficiency more than 19%) consecutively for last 5 years. Kerala also received deficient rainfall consecutively for last 3 years. Interior Karnataka received deficient rainfall in 2002 as well as in 2003. In 2002, a major drought year, as many as 21 meteorological sub divisions received deficient rainfall. But in 2003, only 5 meteorological sub divisions suffered deficient rainfall.

In 2004, 13 meteorological sub divisions received deficient rainfall. On the sub-divisional basis none of the meteorological subdivisions experienced severe drought conditions (seasonal rainfall deficiency exceeding 50%) at the end of the season. However, Himachal Pradesh, West Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, West Rajasthan, Vidarbha and Telangana experienced moderate drought conditions (seasonal rainfall deficiency between 25 and 50%).

(f): To alleviate the sufferings of the farmers in drought-prone States, the Government has implemented many programmes. The

prominent among them are: (i) Development of Watershed programmes, (ii) Implementation of soil conservation measures, (iii) construction of water harvesting structures, farm ponds, (iv) Food for Work programme, (v) Alternate cropping system and (vi) Development of Agro forestry.

Central Ground Water Board constructs exploratory tube wells to delineate potential aquifer zones throughout the country. Successful wells drilled in the course of exploration are handed over to the States for augmenting the water supplies. Special emphasis is laid on exploration in drought-affected areas. Till 31.3.2004, the Board has drilled 5983 various types of exploratory wells in the states of AP, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, J&K, Karnataka, Kerala, MP, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, TN & UP.

(g) & (h): Adequate Crisis Management System are in place under the Relief Commissioners of the States. These arrangements have resulted in timely mitigation of distress of drought-affected population.

Besides, a Crop Weather Watch Group which is functioning under the Union Ministry of Agriculture and is represented by concerned Ministries/Departments, meets every week to monitor and review the position arising due to deficit rainfall / drought conditions.